

Some Key Lessons from Deliberations

Recovery carried out after a major disaster is **time consuming processes**, involving a large number of stakeholders. One of the biggest challenges is of coordination.

Early recovery is seen as an interim process. **Temporary shelters** are built with the intention that these will be a stopgap arrangement, but other than two countries (Japan and Mozambique), these have invariably been found to **turn into permanent houses**.

The agencies responding for **early recovery work in a very different mode** as compared to the development agencies, and the gap in the transition eventually leaves affected communities in the lurch.

Experience also shows that **one national reconstruction authority cannot execute works at all levels**, and thus appropriate authorities need to be established at province, district and local levels.

People's participation is a key element requiring attention while setting up mechanisms, as the **community is the primary stakeholder** in the entire process.

Chile was studied in 2010 and two main lessons emerged for the success of successful risk reduction capacity:

- **Safe construction**
- **Public information and education**

Pakistan established Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) after the 2005 Earthquake, and is now looking back and reviewing how to **merge the two authorities** – ERRA and the National

Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), which was established two years after ERRA.

Owner driven approach within the reconstruction process is a very sound principle. **Owners, however, have very complex and diverse mindsets.** Community level consolidation, and the role to be played by community leaders is crucial and needs to be put in place in early days.

Mobilisation, incentivisation and **convergence of packages for example of livelihoods and house construction** can be of use. Pakistan had made 11 centres in the affected areas that acted as hubs for this purpose.

Iran has rebuilt over 1.3 million houses, and the process has involved the learning of a large number of lessons. Besides the physical aspects of reconstruction, **social, economic and environmental aspects** require significant attention right from the beginning. This needs to be engrained in the process from visioning to creation of action plans.

Level of reconstruction in disaster damaged areas is dependent on the potential and current capacities. **Ambitious goals are usually not good for success.** Recovery projects should be seen as opportunities for development. Local capacities should be the backbone for this process.

Urban and rural plans require different approaches, and should be based fundamentally on realization of development plans.

Construction orders should be detailed in terms of architectural rules, designs, quality control and compliance with codes.

Supervision in such large and complex situations needs to be established as a **networked activity**.

Specific lessons from Bam:

1. Affected area reconstruction should be considered first as a social subject
2. Planning of reconstruction should be based on justice principles
3. Reconstruction of buildings should be based on local capacities
4. Reconstruction process should lead to enabling of people to continue their activities

Recovery is about development, and build back better is about sustainable development. This is specific in terms of not recreating a risk that existed earlier, and not creating any new risks.

In Pakistan's case the Act provides powers to the NDMA to call any agency to act. **The authority cannot be challenged.** The Act should be with a long term vision and not merely focusing on the reconstruction in the context of one disaster event. The Act has also given leverage to the NDMA to have a disaster response force. Fixing of responsibility of various stakeholders in detail is also something the Act needs to do.

Disasters provide an opportunity to do a widespread programme on safety, that **goes beyond the structures damaged and families affected**. Nepal should fully utilize the present opportunity to address multi-hazard and country wide issues that may be faced in the future.

Capacity building needs to be taken up in a **comprehensively planned manner** – if masons are to be trained, the training should be part of a large scheme of

things with sensitization of decision makers, awareness in home owners, training of engineers, and inclusion of electricians, carpenters, fabricators and plumbers along with masons to make it a comprehensive programme of training construction workers.

The larger picture needs to be seen, with the various dimensions and activities ranging from plans to the implementation of various programmes coming together **seamlessly**.

In many examples the evolution of authorities has been such that Project Management Units (PMUs) got converted into societies, and finally into authorities. Clarity is needed whether future disaster response will be the responsibility of the **authority or the ministry of home affairs**.

Specific Lessons from Gujarat:

1. Owner Driven Reconstruction (**ODR**) **demands more from government** than contractor/donor driven
2. **Not all owners have the capacity** to undertake reconstruction on their own
3. Control of material cost critical – **address inflation**
4. Information, education campaign is critical
5. **Technical guidance and quality audit** is critical for ODR
6. Without **enabling mechanism** ODR will reinforce pre disaster pattern of vulnerability
7. **Livelihood rehabilitation should not be asset centric**
8. Setting up an extra ordinary mechanism is necessary, but should have a **clear mandate**

9. Non-involvement of beneficiaries in reconstruction by NGOs, non adherence to quality and lack of **accountability**
10. Careful selection of NGOs needed, and they should have an **exit policy**
11. Funding from **lenders** may involve cost and time over runs and also in **cost escalation**

Issues

1. How to ensure compliance? In Gujarat there was no option but to withhold the third installment to force retrofitting
2. How to ensure **real participation**? What is the lowest level of identifiable last unit?
3. How to ensure accountability of external agencies to take part in reconstruction? Can't be very strict, can't be very lax.
4. How to **institutionalize the initiatives**?
5. Mechanisms for enforcement
6. Problems with tenants – legal and illegal tenants
7. Assistance to commercial establishments, particularly rented commercial establishments
8. **Political pressure** to disburse money early – formulation of policies and guidelines may take some time
9. Livelihood rehabilitation generally gets neglected as the focus of reconstruction remains reconstruction of

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